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HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS
New York, 12-30 July 1993

COMMENTS ON ISSUES BEFORE THE CONFERENCE AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AS CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR INDIAN OCEAN MARINE AFFAIRS COOPERATION (IOMAC)

1. The Organization for Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Cooperation (IOMAC) was formally established by the first Ministerial-level Conference on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation in the Indian Ocean in the field of Marine Affairs in the context of the New Ocean Regime, held in 1985 (IOMAC-I), on the basis of the IOMAC Declaration, Programme of Cooperation and Plan of Action adopted by the Conference, and by the 1990 Arusha Agreement on the Organization for Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Cooperation (IOMAC), adopted by the second IOMAC Conference (IOMAC-II), to further consolidate the intergovernmental cooperative framework. Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the United Republic of Tanzania are signatories to, or have ratified, the Agreement. Over 35 Governments and 25 international organizations have participated in IOMAC activities.

2. IOMAC is based on the concept of integrated marine affairs management which was endorsed in chapter 17 of Agenda 21 adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which recognizes that the marine environment, including the oceans and all seas and adjacent areas, forms an integrated system which requires new approaches to marine and coastal area management and development at the national, subregional and global levels, approaches that are integrated in content; the implementation of strategies and activities under the programme areas related to marine and coastal areas and seas requires effective institutional arrangements at national, subregional, regional and global levels, as appropriate. There are numerous national, international and regional institutions, both within and outside the United Nations system, with competence in marine issues, and there is a need to improve coordination and strengthen links among them. It is also important to ensure that an integrated and multisectoral approach to marine issues is pursued at all levels. States should consider, inter alia, strengthening, and extending where necessary, intergovernmental regional cooperation; introducing, where necessary, coordination among relevant United Nations and other multilateral organizations

at the subregional and regional levels, including consideration of co-location of their staff; and arranging for periodic interregional consultations.

3. IOMAC activities focus on the following sectors:

(i) Marine science, ocean services and marine technology;

(ii) Living resources;

(iii) Non-living resources;

(iv) Maritime transport and communications;

(v) Marine environment;

(vi) Other fields relevant to cooperation in marine affairs.

With regard to the monitoring and management of living resources in the Indian Ocean region, IOMAC has initiated and acted on a number of important and far-reaching measures based on international cooperative efforts under its auspices.

4. In 1985, IOMAC-I took the initiative to review the status of Indian Ocean fisheries and call for the early establishment of an appropriate international regulatory body for the management of the Indian Ocean tuna, which had come under rapidly increasing pressure from distant water fishing fleets entering the Indian Ocean. IOMAC has continued to monitor developments in this area and has contributed to the emergence of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission now being established in the region for the purpose of managing the highly migratory species of the Indian Ocean.

5. In 1991, IOMAC adopted the Declaration on Large-scale Pelagic Drift-Net Fishing in the Indian Ocean, resolving that large-scale pelagic drift-netting should be banned from the Indian Ocean region for all time, and called for cooperation and the adoption of measures to ensure the effective prohibition thereof.

6. At the second IOMAC Conference (IOMAC-II) held at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, IOMAC adopted the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Sanctuary for Whales for All Time. At present, IOMAC is moving towards extension of the Declaration in order that the Indian Ocean can be designated as a sanctuary for all marine mammals.

7. From its inception, IOMAC has recognized the need for cooperation between coastal States and States active on the high seas in order to ensure the rational management of the ocean and the sustainable utilization of its resources.

8. IOMAC attaches considerable importance to the remaining issues on the management of high seas resources, particularly straddling stocks and other shared resources, with the eventual aim of progressing towards international cooperation in the management of the Indian Ocean basin and its resources as a whole.